Tuesday, May 26, 2009 • 7 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 167 / P18 / online: www.inquirer.net

North Korea holds powerful nuclear test

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—NORTH KOREA yesterday carried out a powerful underground nuclear test—much larger than the one conducted in 2006—in a major provocation in the escalating international standoff over its rogue nuclear and missile programs.

Pyongyang announced the test, and Russia's defense ministry confirmed an atomic explosion at 9:54 a.m. (0054 GMT) in northeastern North Korea, estimating the blast's yield at 10 to 20 kilotons—comparable to the bombs that flat-

NORTH KOREA/A11

NPA leader's sister killed in Davao Or. ACROSS / A11

Peso heading to 46-to-$1 territory BUSINESS / B1

Magic thwart Cavs despite LeBron's 41 SPORTS / A14

Abducted Fil-Am activist freed ACROSS / A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS



BEST DIRECTOR Filipino Brillante Mendoza poses after receiving the Best Director award for his movie "Kinatay" during the closing ceremony of the 62nd Cannes Film Festival on Sunday in Cannes in southern France. AFP

Mendoza is best director at Cannes

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Entertainment

IN A STUNNING DARK HORSE TRIumph, Filipino filmmaker Brillante "Dante" Mendoza won the Best Director prize for "Kinatay" at the 62nd Cannes Film Festival on Sunday (Monday evening in Manila).

"I feel like I'm floating," Mendoza told the Inquirer in an exclusive phone interview from France, minutes after his win in the world's most prestigious film festival. "I'm so happy."

Mendoza bested past Oscar and Cannes winners, like Taiwan's Ang Lee, Spain's Pedro Almodovar, New Zealand's Jane Campion, Denmark's Lars von Trier, and the United States' Quentin Tarantino.

As the first Filipino to win the Best Director prize in Cannes, he joins the list of revered filmmakers who have won the coveted prize, including Martin Scorsese, Ingmar Bergman, Francois Truffaut, Luis

MENDOZA/A6

Malls, schools join antiflu campaign

DOH: First 2 patients recovered

By Doris C. Dumlao, Dona Pazzibugan and TJ Burgonio

EVEN THE SHOPPING MALL giants have waded into the fight against the dreaded A(H1N1) flu virus.

Schools and colleges, as well as government and private offices, have joined forces to fight off the threats from a disease that has killed at least 91 people and sickened more than 12,500 others in 46 countries around the world, including the United States.

Not taking anything for granted, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus yesterday urged students who had just returned from abroad, or were coming home from abroad, to go on self-quarantine for 10 days before going back to school with the reopening of classes this June.

The country's three largest shopping mall chains—the SM Mall empire, the Ayala Malls and the Gokongweis' Robinsons—said they were taking active measures to protect the health of customers and mall goers, and to prevent any outbreak of the swine flu

MALLS/A7



WATER CANNON FURY Farmers, workers and other protesters, including Manila Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo, are hosed down while holding a rally outside the Batasang Pambansa gate in Quezon City. They are pushing for the extension of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. MATT LEPE

Burma spits at criticism of Asean

RANGOON—BURMA (MYANMAR) on Monday strongly rejected criticism by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) of its trial of Aung San Suu Kyi and accused Thailand, one of the military regime's few supporters, of interference.

The prison tribunal hearing allegations that the prodemocracy icon violated her house arrest resumed for its second week amid a call by the European Union on the junta to grant her "immediate release."

Asean had expressed "grave concern" over the treatment of Suu Kyi and said Burma's "honor and the credibility" were at stake, a rare step by the group which hardly ever speaks out on the domestic affairs of its members.

The military regime accused neighboring Thailand, which issued the statement one week

BURMA/A11

SuperLotto jackpot may reach ₱165M

By Julie M. Aurelio

EXPECT LONGER-THAN-USUAL lines today at lotto outlets. The reason: The 6/49 Super Lotto jackpot is estimated to hit ₱165 million for tonight's draw.

No one among the millions of people who tried their luck on Sunday night, when the pot reached ₱151.3 million, got the winning combination of 40-13-48-45-12-29.

Tonight is the 17th SuperLotto draw since April 16, when no one correctly guessed the winning combination, resulting in a larger jackpot with each draw, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) said yesterday.

Dr. Larry Cedro, the PCSO

SUPERLOTTO/A11

MERALCO: TITANS AT THE GATE

Are the Lopezes retreating from glory?

By Abigail L. Ho
(Last of three parts)

i-TEAM Report
Fernando del Mundo
Chief

THE LOPEZ EMPIRE used to be so pervasive in Metro Manila that a resident cannot help but depend on it for basic needs, such as light and water, telephone, news and entertainment, or commuting on its speeding superhighway.

Not anymore.

Deep in debt, the Lopezes have been divesting to pay off obligations. The family's crown jewel—Manila Electric Co. (Meralco)—has been under assault from an administration smarting from perceived political slights from its influential radio-TV network.

The Lopez flagship firm Benpres Holdings Corp., exited in 2006 from Maynilad Water Services Inc., effectively removing $190 million worth of guaranteed debt.

Last year, Benpres and First Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPH) gave up Manila North Tollways Corp. and got around P6 billion that was used to pare down debts substantially.

The latest in this string of divestments was the sale of nearly the entire stake of the family in Meralco to the group led by Manuel Pangilinan of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT).

The widely publicized deal drastically cut the Lopezes' stake in Meralco to just 13.4 percent from a controlling share of 33.4 percent in the company that distributes power to some 4.5 million

ARE THE LOPEZES/A6



Proper hand washing needs trash can, too

By TJ Burgonio

WHILE PROPER HAND WASHING may help contain the spread of a deadly virus, it was apparently not enough to cool down the President's temper yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo sang "two Happy Birthdays" while showing schoolchildren the right way to wash their hands as a preventive measure against the A(H1N1) flu virus.

But the demonstration, which was held on a campus just outside Malacañang, somehow ended on a sour note.

PROPER/A7



STORY readers US Ambassador Kristie Kenney (center) and TV host Kim Atienza interact with street children of Tondo, Manila, at the Manila Ocean Park. ROMEL ROTONI

US ambassador, TV host underwater storytellers

By Lawrence de Guzman and Kate Pedroso
Inquirer Research

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THAT YOU get to see US Ambassador Kristie Kenney jump into an aquarium filled with live sea creatures.

But dive she did during the Inquirer Read-Along session on Thursday at Manila Ocean Park to impress on the minds of some 60 children the importance of Philippine marine life.

Kenney and TV host Kim Atienza had taken turns reading to the children and then disappeared, only to reappear a few minutes later swimming inside the aquarium.

The two readers retained their street clothes—Atienza was still wearing his signature salakot hat—but this time, they put on scuba masks and booties, strapped air tanks on their backs, and carried a tarpaulin banner that read, "Happy Ocean Month."

US AMBASSADOR/A11

Second FrontPage

WEATHER FORECAST

EZ2 — SUERTRES — FOUR DIGIT

MEGALOTTO 6/45

P42,370,673.40

5 Coast Guard officers relieved

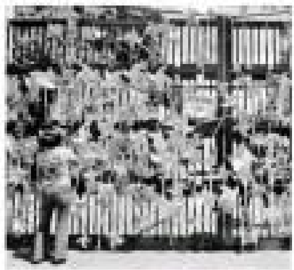
By Kristine L. Alave and TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD HAS ORDERED the relief of five officers and men assigned to its Sta. Clara, Batangas detachment for allowing the voyage of the overloaded MB Commando 6 which sank en route to Mindoro last Saturday, killing 12 persons.

CA orders freeze on Legacy vehicles

'Boat owner wanted to save on fuel'

By Marlon Ramos



ANTINUKE

Members of Greenpeace post protest placards and pinwheels at the gates of Congress in Quezon City as they call for the rejection of any proposal to open up a nuclear power plant in the country.

Georgetown U's summa cum laude is a Fil-Am



TOLENTINO

PNP to probe attacks on politicians

By Tarra Quismundo

THE PHILIPPINE National Police (PNP) has created yet another special task group to investigate and prevent attacks on elected officials amid a spate of slays and assassination attempts on politicians a year away from the [illegible] polls.

PNP chief Director General Jesus Verzosa announced yesterday that Task Group EGO (elected government officials) has been created as a special unit under the PNP's election security task force to investigate previous attacks, offer rewards for leads on suspects, and prevent the repeat of these incidents by providing security to "high-risk" officials.

The group would be headed by the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

The task group would "focus police efforts" on violence against all elected officials in the run up to the May 2010 elections and work as a separate body from Task Force Usig, PNP's special unit on extrajudicial slays.

"We are activating Task Group EGO that shall be responsible for the immediate resolution of all previous violent incidents against elected government officials and investigation of incidents that could happen," Verzosa said in a press conference yesterday.

"Task Group EGO is also tasked to initiate appropriate security measures for identified 'high-risk' elected government officials," said Verzosa.

Verzosa said the task group was created on orders of President Macapagal-Arroyo "to put an end to violence against politicians and elected government."

"We have also observed that political violence appears to be heating up already as 52 shooting incidents victimizing local government officials have been reported," said Verzosa.

From January to May 20 alone, the PNP has recorded 52 attacks against local politicians, among them against governors, mayors and barangay officials. Of this number, 30 ended in deaths and 22 caused injuries to elected officials.

These figures include the May 13 bomb attack on the convoy of Sulu Governor Sakur Tan near the Jolo capitol and last week's shooting of [illegible], Isabela Mayor Francisco Talosig.

Bidding award set to be delayed

By Kristine L. Alave

Ang Kapatiran to field youngest president bet

By Philip C. Tubeza



DE LOS REYES

First Holdings willing to sell Meralco stake

By Doris C. Dumlao

Corrections



100 FG scholars honored

Farmers charge Nograles

By Nikko Dizon

NBI awaits Kho, Belo statements on sex video

By Jeannette I. Andrade

Newsbriefs

Saudi sets new age limit for OFWs

Immigration bars Aussie rape convict

Customs to auction intravenous fluids

PNP to replace paraffin testing

The Daily Gospel

6 Pinoys freed in Nigeria

LAGOS—THE NIGERIAN army said Sunday it freed a total of six Filipinos held hostage in the oil-rich Niger Delta.

The Joint Task Force (JTF), the special army-police unit deployed in the Niger Delta, freed three Filipinos on Saturday and three more on Sunday, a spokesperson for the force Col. Rabe Abubakar said in a statement.

The three freed Sunday are receiving medical treatment in a military hospital, Abubakar said. The Filipinos were crewmen on a ship that was hijacked about 10 days ago.

Also on Sunday the JTF, whose operations over the past 10 days have been confined to Delta State, extended a raid to another southern oil state, Rivers, Abubakar said in a statement.

Local media have quoted residents fleeing the main target area as far as Gbaramatu Kingdom in Delta State, as accusing the armed forces of indiscriminate bombing of civilians.

The JTF has in the past says it is only conducting a "cordon and search" operation. AFP

IN THE KNOW

Mendoza is best director at Cannes



BRILLANTE (center) poses next to US director Terry Gilliam after winning the Best Director award. AFP

Real stories

Historic triumph

Brocka must be cheering

Tarantino defends

Collective gasp, boos

Powerful

Asian films

Me: I critic

The truth is not pretty

Are the Lopezes retreating from glory?

THE LOPEZ EMPIRE



Maturing obligations

Renegotiating moves

Sufficient funds generated

Painful decision

Benpres unifying force

Proper hand washing needs trash can, too

American, 2 Filipino women watched

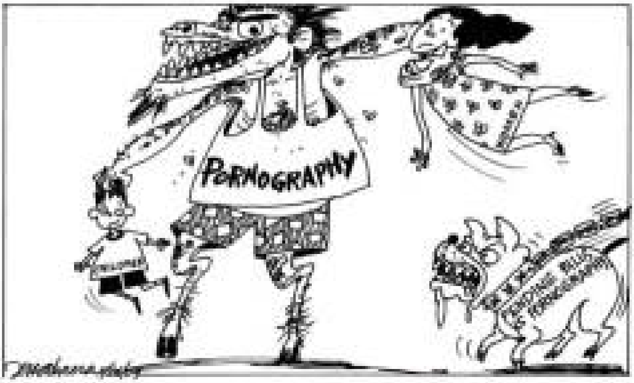
Malls, schools join antiflu drive

INQUIRER
OPINION

Death before dishonor

EDITORIALS

Implied consent



'Once upon a time'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



Survey says

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



Get a fill of election details

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



My other guy

YOUNG BLOOD

Wendi Pereyra-Garcia

The attractions of underground porn

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



The 20-percent presidency

NEWSSTAND

John Nery



NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

THEY SAID

Without delay

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Puno's clean backyard

LETTERS

It was the law, not Erap's cigarette

NFA employees support Lozada



PROTESTERS rally in front of the Ombudsman's office

Walk the talk on corruption: don't offer bribes at all

Crucial text message from GSIS unknown, unreceived

How Defensor can clear his name

De Quiros missed real issue in case

Constituent fatigue

COMMENTARY

Minyong Ordoñez

Across the NATION

Abducted Fil-Am activist freed

NPA leader's sister killed in Davao Or., says group



LAST DAYS OF SUMMER

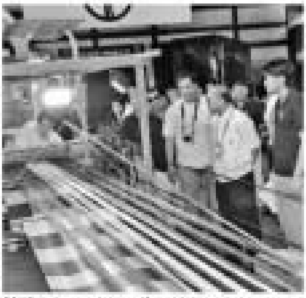
DEATH OF BACOLOD TRADER

SC upholds withdrawal of parricide raps

DOJ subpoenas Big 3 oil firms for 'predatory pricing'

HOMETOWN Snapshot

Bohol town targets 'longest' handwoven raffia



Another Army battalion deployed to Panay

Army slams NPA for deaths of 3 unarmed troops



VIVA LA VIRGEN

DepEd generates ₱250M in savings from 'Brigada Eskwela'

1st topic for 2M students in C. Luzon: A(H1N1)

Home-school link

Other passengers

Emergency powers

Bicol

Negative

Referral hospitals

NEWSBRIEFS

LAOAG CITY

6 die in road accident

LUCENA CITY

4 drown in river

LAGUNA

Eng'r 'salvage' victim

Militants launch party

LEGAZPI CITY

NPAs attack detachment

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO

2 traders found dead

North Korea holds powerful nuclear test

GMA to pursue Korea visit despite nuke test

'Blatant defiance'

Ground trembled

Oil deal

Talks abandoned

US ambassador, TV host underwater storytellers

Marine crusader

Gecko, skink, dragon

Kids, teachers rave

Credits

Burma junta spits at criticism of Asean

No sign of bowing to pressure

Supporters continue vigil

Journalists to observe trial

SuperLotto jackpot may reach ₱165M

Trusting in heaven

Prize still unclaimed

Thermal paper

SPORTS



ANDY Murray: First-round winner

Safina blanks rival as Mauresmo falls

[illegible]

Magic thwart Cavs despite LeBron's 41

Grab 2-1 East series lead

[illegible]



MAGIC'S Dwight Howard (left) rejects a shot by the Cavs' LeBron James

Roach looks at 3 possible Manny foes

[illegible]

SPORTSWATCH

Cagayan batters reach finals

[illegible]

French Open on Studio 23

[illegible]

RACING TIPS

By Top Choice

At Santa Ana Park

[illegible]

Dear IOC: Beware of mad dogs in RP

BARE EYE



Recah Trinidad

[illegible]



POOL KING

[illegible]

NCA all set for May 28 Big Event

[illegible]



Oracle-Pharex PBL title series unfolds today

PSC rejects ₱7.5-M budget for 1st Asian Youth Games

Angping sues wushu exec Camacho for estafa

Red-hot Button makes it 5 of 6



T'wondo girls vie in Smart tourney

Muere puts away MBA Open masters crown


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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday



President of state-run college axed

Ombudsman finds official guilty of nepotism for hiring half-brother

By Jerry E. Esplanada

MORE THAN A YEAR AFTER THE OMBUDSMAN FOUND him guilty of the lesser charge of nepotism, Dr. Enerico M. Sampang was finally dismissed as president of Philippine State College of Aeronautics (Philsca)—the country's only state-run aeronautics college—in Pasay City.

Sampang's dismissal was announced by Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) Chair Emmanuel Y. Angeles in a news conference at the CHEd office in Diliman, Quezon City, yesterday.

Ironically, there are more serious charges pending against Sampang, who was appointed Philsca president in 2004, at the Office of the Ombudsman. He has been accused of appointing his wife as Philsca director even though she had no background in flying. He was also charged with falsifying his job records and of rigging the bidding for the purchase of training aircraft worth at least P25 million.

But in the end, Sampang was convicted on a lesser charge, that of appointing his half-brother, Lorenzo M. Pineda, as his personal driver.

In a decision dated April 25, 2008, the Ombudsman found Sampang guilty of the "most serious offense of nepotism with aggravating circumstances of dishonesty, oppression and gross discourtesy."

He was subsequently ordered "dismissed from government service with forfeiture of all benefits and with prejudice to reemployment in any branch of government or any of its agencies, including government-owned or controlled corporations."

CHEd had received a copy of the order as early as May 2008 but then CHEd Chair Romulo Neri did not act on it for unknown reasons.

Before Sampang's dismissal, the Ombudsman had ordered his preventive suspension in connection with alleged irregularities in the bidding for the overhaul and repair of the engine of a Philsca training plane. The contract for the project was awarded in February 2006 to Aviation Technology Innovators Inc., the lowest bidder.

Earlier this year, Philsca workers filed another case against Sampang before the Ombudsman.

This time, they accused the school head, his wife Filipinas Rosario Sampang, also the school's management audit analyst, and five members of the Philsca bids and awards committee of rigging and simulating the bidding for the purchase of five refurbished Cessna (Model 172) training aircraft worth at least P25 million.

They also alleged that Sampang falsified his employment records.

"In his resume, he made it appear he was a former vice president for administration and finance of the City College of Manila. He also misrepresented himself as financial consultant of the Chicago-based Underwriters Training Council while in fact, he was only a trainee, a member of the De La Salle

PRESIDENT A18





Atienza: 'Millions of reasons' why council OK'd ordinance

NDCC: Relocating oil depot will reduce risk to residents

Actress cleared of oral defamation rap







FUN AND GAMES

Homeless man stabbed dead by robber

Hayden Kho's life in danger

ON TARGET



METROBRIEFS

Fire destroys 11 houses in Las Piñas

Malabon barangay official shot dead

President of college axed

Hundreds of UK lawmakers could face ouster



DBP

Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The WORLD

S. Koreans say Roh driven to suicide

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—AS SOUTH KOREANS laid white chrysanthemums at makeshift memorials for their former president, Roh Moo-hyun, many said on Sunday that the once-popular champion of clean government had been driven to suicide by more than just humiliating bribery allegations.

Pakistan claims to have cleared key neighborhoods of Taliban



Italy PM urged to explain ties with teen



China asked to help bag accidental millionaires

Susan Boyle sings again, enters finals



BOYLE

IN THIS ISSUE

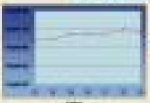
BUSINESS



Peso heading to 46-to-$1 territory

Indicators

Currencies



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

47.17 = $1

Stock Market

Stocks up on rate cut hopes



PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

'Hot money,' remittances boost local currency

THE PESO YESTERDAY STRENGTHENED TO THE 46-TO-A-DOLLAR territory as lingering concerns over the US economy led some people to dump the greenback in favor of emerging market currencies.

GSIS eyes 'legal actions' against IBM



Aboitiz unit pays ₱8.29B for geothermal facilities

Stocks face danger of serious fall

Market Rider

Den Somera



Sky Garden opens in SM North Edsa

Peso heading to 46-to-$1

GSIS . . .

Philippine Stock Exchange

FX inflows to continue, says BSP

Borrowing from abroad to support BOP 'unnecessary'

Napocor to pay off $1.4B in debt for '09

Tricks of the tried



Industry groups back bill to cut power rates

More firms seen to follow ANI listing

BUSINESS

Markets shrug off nuke test

Thailand slips into recession

Honda Launches New Civic



LIFESTYLE Wellness
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

Rene Valerio's age-defying workout



DR. RENE Valerio working on his biceps

By Margo C. Enriquez
Contributor

FITNESS LEGENDS Dr. Bob Delmonteque, 86, and Jack LaLanne, 95, are still buffed and active. Like these icons, plastic surgeon Rene del Castillo Valerio believes in growing younger as one gets older, and hopes to look like them in his later years. He does it the traditional way: diet and exercise.

For a man of the right age (a euphemism for a man in his 50s), Valerio pumps iron at the gym for 10-12 hours a week, and bench-presses 225 lbs after a 12-hour day as chairman of the Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery department of St. Luke's Hospital, its future Bonifacio Global City branch, and Beverly Hills (UTM).

"His program is like that of a 25-year-old who's into bodybuilding. Of course, you assume his limitations—which he doesn't have," says Jeremiah Rafael Conde, business development manager and fitness director of Planet Infinity Gym. Conde has been responsible for the hard bodies of Piolo Pascual and Angel Locsin.

Universal grail

He undertook a fitness program 15 years ago for health and image reasons. Aside from dealing with a family history of cardiovascular diseases, he also had to look good for his profession.

As one of the country's top plastic surgeons, Valerio couldn't tell prospective patients to have their love handles zapped if he himself was not in good shape. "You need to walk your talk. I don't make any excuses. Even if I'm tired after a long day, I still go to the gym four to five times a week."

Valerio began working out at a hard-core bodybuilding gym, then tried the bigger fitness chains. Although he won't, he felt he was not progressing. Some gyms had a cookie-cutter approach to fitness which did not fully meet individual needs. Most gyms didn't impart the correct lifting techniques, the necessary methods to prevent overtraining, and proper nutrition.

Valerio's search for the universal grail of health ended when he joined Planet Infinity at Greenmeadows, Mother Ignacia St., Quezon City. "You should not only take care of your body but also your innermost being," he says. He believes that the spirit is the most neglected aspect of who we are. "To live a purposeful life, we need to become acquainted with the inner self and understand the true extent of our spiritual energy, and use it. Likewise, the body is the temple of the spirit, appreciated for its potential, then maintained."

Planet Infinity fulfills these ideals. "This is a complete gym where it comes to the body, mind and spirit," says Valerio. Its 24-hour service and proximity to the TV networks has made it a popular gym for actors such as Dingdong Dantes.

Planet Infinity was built by the Bread of Life, of which Valerio is a member. On Wednesday nights, he attends the service before he has a cardiovascular workout. The gym also has a bookstore and library which offers a unique collection of books on fitness. Valerio reads "Body Building 101" by Michael Berg on correct weightlifting techniques, and Don Colbert's "Seven Pillars of Health" and "Divine Health."

"The Buddy (as Valerio is called) was already in excellent

Next C2

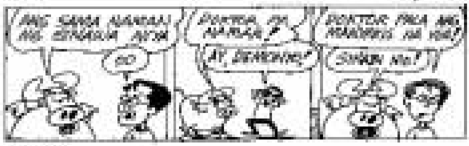


BUILDING shoulder, chest and arm muscles

GARFIELD — By Jim Davis



A. LIPIN — By Jess Abrera



PUGAD BABOY

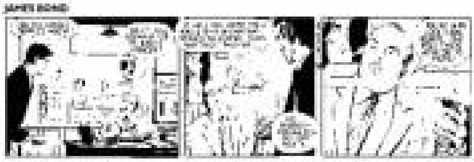


DICK TRACY





JAMES BOND

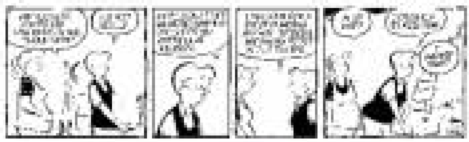


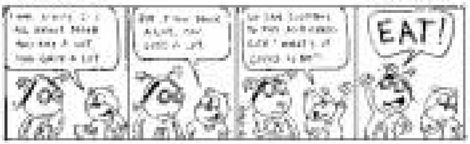


BABY BLUES — By Jerry Scott

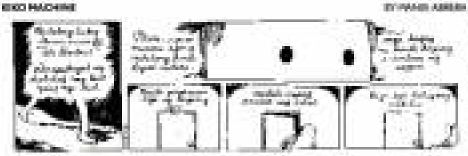




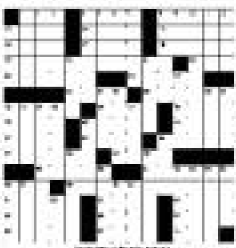


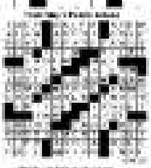


KIKO MACHINE — By Manix Abrera



CROSSWORD PUZZLE





HOROSCOPE

By Frances Drake

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

		5		9		7	2	
3	6					1		8
		2			6			
		7			4	9		
		3		7		5		
		8	5			2		
			2			4		
7		4					9	1
	9	1		6		8		

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Answer to previous puzzle

1	7	4	5	9	3	8	6	2
9	8	2	1	7	6	3	4	5
3	5	6	8	2	4	9	1	7
6	9	5	7	4	1	2	8	3
4	3	8	6	5	2	7	9	1
7	2	1	9	3	8	4	5	6
5	1	7	3	8	9	6	2	4
8	4	6	2	1	7	5	3	9
2	3	9	4	6	5	1	7	8



Be wary of hidden sodium, not just salt

By Irene C. Perez

Eating healthy

Lifestyle modification

Healthy, tasty recipes



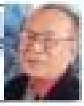
Salad



Meat course

Dessert

Our thoughts have power and energy



Inner Awareness

Jaime T. Licauco

Implicate order

Rene Valerio's...

Mind over muscle

Amazing results

How to enjoy running minus the injury, stress, boredom



Enjoy running

Recovery days

Compete with yourself

Generic drugs urged to get seal of quality and safety

Center of excellence

Grapefruit, lemongrass, green tea and cucumber invigorate one's senses





ENTERTAINMENT

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SHOW TIME









Why short films matter

A



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DOLLY WOOD

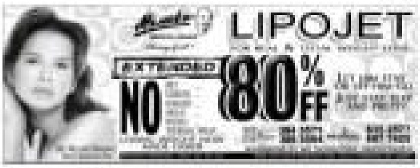
Dolly Anne Carvajal

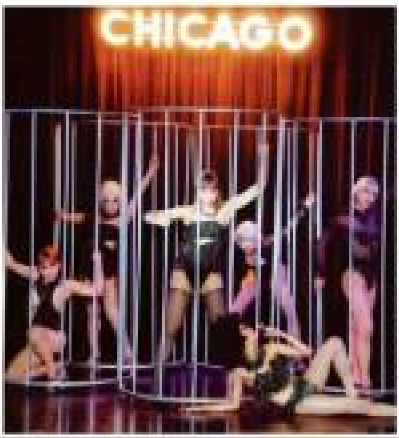
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2 ANGELS & DEMONS
3 THE ACCIDENTAL HUSBAND
4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
5 ANGELS & DEMONS
6 HOUSE
7 WOLVERINE / STAR TREK XI
8 LITSONERO
9 HEAVENLY TOUCH
10 BFF: BESTFRIEND FOREVER

ERMITA

1 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
2 ANGELS & DEMONS
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4 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
5 BFF: BEST FRIEND FOREVER
6 HOUSE
7 LITSONERO

METRO EAST

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
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4 HOUSE
5 ANGELS & DEMONS
6 X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE
7 LITSONERO
8 DED NA SI LOLO

NOVALICHES

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
3 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
4 LITSONERO

PIONEER

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
3 THE ACCIDENTAL HUSBAND
4 HOUSE

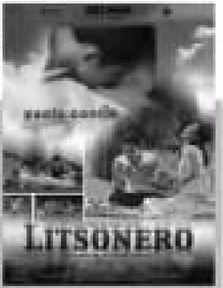
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LITSONERO

SHOWING TOMORROW

MOVIEWORLD



STA. ROSA

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
3 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
4 MAJOR MOVIE STAR

LIPA

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
3 X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE
4 THEY WAIT

DASMARINAS

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 MAJOR MOVIE STAR

IMUS

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE
3 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
4 MAJOR MOVIE STAR

ANGELES

1 X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE
2 BFF: BESTFRIEND FOREVER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 STAR TREK

STARMILLS

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
3 ANGELS & DEMONS
4 MAJOR MOVIE STAR
5 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
6 17 AGAIN

BACOLOD

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 STAR TREK
5 DED NA SI LOLO
6 THEY WAIT

ILOILO

1 ANGELS & DEMONS
2 BFF: BEST FRIENDS FOREVER
3 NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM 2
4 MAJOR MOVIE STAR
5 DED NA SI LOLO
6 17 AGAIN

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Why short films matter



JP CARPIO

[illegible]

Iza keeps . . .

[illegible]

More monkey slaps, more humiliation for Stiller

WASHINGTON—NOT SINCE CHARLTON Heston told a "dirty ape" what to do with his stinking paws has an actor been so tormented by a monkey.

While not exactly the kind of abject captivity that Heston endured in "Planet of the Apes," the slapping match Ben Stiller went through with Crystal, the Capuchin monkey—for a second time—was torture enough.

Depression

"I really dislike the monkey," Stiller said during an interview with co-stars Hank Azaria and Amy Adams at the Smithsonian Castle in Washington, where some of "Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian" was filmed.

"There's no way to feel great about having a monkey slap your face on any level," Stiller continued, adding that the trainer would be off-camera shouting "Get him! Get him! Hit him harder! Hit him harder! And then they give it a treat."

Azaria could tell Stiller was dreading the scene because he arrived on the set "despondent."

"I've never seen you so sad that day and nothing could snap you out of it," Azaria told Stiller. "It was really the depths of depression over 'monkey day.'"

"'Monkey day' is never a good day," Stiller replied. "You start to question your life and your career."

Stiller says it was much better being slapped by Adams in the movie because "there's a kiss that comes before and after."

Adams says that was the one scene that made her laugh so hard she ruined take after take, which meant "we had to start over and I was slapping and laughing and kissing and laughing." (which Stiller quipped "happens a lot in my marriage.")

While Adams and Azaria say they loved playing with the monkey on their own, they weren't without their own complaints. Both hated their wardrobe.

As Egyptian ruler Kahmunrah, Azaria wears a tunic that other characters ridicule throughout the film as a skirt. Azaria says "it was highly uncomfortable, very binding," which prevented him from being able to sit down. They also gave him a codpiece that was stuffed with cardboard and wood to make it bigger but more painful.

His headdress topped out at [illegible] and Azaria says it "weighed more than the table we're sitting at now." The crew had to keep redesigning it to make it lighter.

No stretch

Adams, who played aviator Amelia Earhart, had to contend with the crew redesigning her jodhpurs so they'd be tighter and tighter. She says the breeches were made of wool with "absolutely no stretch," which made them hard to run in, adding that she "ripped more than one pair in the back."

Despite the suffering, Stiller's character, museum guard Larry Daley, still learned the key to happiness by the end of the movie. (Notably, not money.)

Stiller's personal key to happiness?

"Sugar and lying to the cameras and maybe just a little bit of alcohol."



BEN STILLER (here with Amy Adams) says: "There's no way to feel great about having a monkey slap your face on any level. [The trainer would be] shouting, 'Get him! Get him! Hit him harder!' And then they give it a treat."



Tarantino gives 'Kinatay' his nod

FILMMAKER QUENTIN TARANTINO gave the thumbs up to Brillante Mendoza's "Kinatay," according to Tikoy Aguiluz, Cinemanila International Film Festival director. Aguiluz said this vote of confidence was given the day after the Filipino film's premiere at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival, while they were "having coffee at the Carlton" (photo at right).

"Kinatay" is one of the 20 films that vied for the Palme d'Or at the prestigious festival, competing against Tarantino's "Inglourious Basterds" and other entries from all over the world.



In top photo, Mendoza and actors Coco Martin and Maria Isabel Lopez receive applause after the screening of "Kinatay" at the Grand Theatre Lumiere.

Thirst for violence or quest for peace



VIEWFINDER
Nestor U. Torre

"WOLVERINE" IS ONE OF THE most anticipated movies of the year. Last May 1, when we caught it at the Power Plant Cineplex, five of the six theaters there were showing the Hugh Jackman starrer!

Did the flashed film live up to its advance hype? On points of visual and action highlights, definitely. Its digital showstopper includes a memorable sequence in which Wolverine (Jackman) leaps from a vehicle that's about to crash—all the way to attacking helicopter, which he swiftly disables with his lethal "finger knives."

The film is tagged by Gavin Hood is further enhanced by Jackman's focused and felt portrayal of the conflicted mutant whose bones were implanted with indestructible metal to be used by the story's nemesis, Col. Stryker, in his megalomaniacal plot to harness all mutants' powers for his own dastardly ends.

The plot thickens when the movie sees the hero's brother, played by Liev Schreiber, to provide the key element that lifts the storytelling from the standard action-blockbuster level to the more and human heights, as a classic struggle between the brother's espousal of inter-violence and Jackman's character's quest for a peaceful life.

As the older brother consumed by his thirst for violence, Schreiber isn't able to go beyond the usual "animalistic" depth. But Jackman provides the depth and range required for the film to hit home emotionally, especially in the scenes involving his character's tragic lady love.

All told, however, "Wolverine" ends to overwhelm viewers with too many action and sci-fi encounters that feel repetitive after a while. A glaring example of this is the extended fight to the finish staged at a former nuclear facility. Yes, this is a "final" showdown, but greater realism, believability and restraint are needed for viewers' sympathy to be strong.

Despite its excesses, however, "Wolverine" remains viewable due to its occasionally effective combination of exciting visuals and Jackman's rich portrayal. It should offer more than this, but given the production's action-attraction intentions it will have to do.

Sing at your own risk

Last year, Christian Bautista sang the Philippine National Anthem before a boxing match and was roundly criticized for forgetting some lyrics.

Recently, it was Martin Nievera's turn to get zapped for giving his rendition of the anthem his personal spin in Las Vegas, before the Pacquiao-Hatton fight. The words out. Singing stars, attempts to sing the Philippine National Anthem at your own risk.

What ticked off some officials about Martin's rendition was his decision to vary the anthem's usual tempo, which is a rousing march. Indeed, this controversy over the issue of tempo is nothing new. We recall that a version of the anthem intended for movie houses was similarly criticized because it slowed the tempo down, from martial to mournful dirge—and even, at some particularly aggrieved critics put it, funereal.

For our part, we don't fault Martin's rendition for its varied tempo, but more for its last notes which we thought were un-aesthetically shrill and overy, as the singer tried to end his performance on a particularly patriotic high. Patriotism is great, but not at the expense of musicality.

As for other singers tapped to sing the anthem in the future, we trust they'll learn from Christian and Martin's less than triumphant experiences and approach the assignment with all the care, caution and astute musical judgment they can summon up. Who was it who said that lightning strikes twice?



NOT GUILTY Trouble-ridden singer Amy Winehouse has cancelled a comeback show in London after a prolonged holiday clouded by reports of ill health. The 25-year-old Grammy-winning star, who has been struggling with drugs, was due to play with her band at the Shepherd's Bush Empire on May 21.